

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SYE-00 SCCT-01 SS-15 SSO-00 A-01

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 10169

DEPT PASS A/SY/FO

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC PDIP GR

SUBJECT: MURDER OF EMBASSY OFFICER RICHARD S. WELCH

REF: A. ATHENS 10112; B. ATHENS 10113; C. ATHENS 10116;

D. DEPT 302054; E. DEPT 302384

1. SUMMARY: INVESTIGATION BY GREEK AUTHORITIES INTO MURDER OF EMBASSY OFFICER RICHARD S. WELCH BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS CONTINUES WITH LITTLE CONCRETE RESULTS TO DATE. SENIOR GREEK SECURITY OFFICIALS UNABLE TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY, MOTIVATION, AFFILIATION OR WHEREABOUTS OF ASSILANTS. MRS WELCH AND OFFICIAL DRIVER PRESENT DURING FATAL ASSAULT CLAIM THREE MASKED MEN APPROACHED WELCH OFFICIAL VEHICLE ON RETURN HOME FROM PARTY; AND WHEN WELCH STEPPED OUT OF THE CAR OUTSIDE GARDEN GATE, ONE OF THE MASKED INDIVIDUALS SHOT WELCH THREE TIMES WITH A PISTOL. HOSPITAL AUTHORITIES ADVISED WELCH WAS DEAD ON ARRIVAL. CORONER'S INVESTIGATION DISCLOSED TWO SHOTS (CALIBER 45) PASSED THROUGH WELCH'S BODY, AND ONE SHOT PASSED THROUGH CLOTHING WITHOUT TOUCHING CHEST. AT EMBASSY REQUEST, POLICE HAVE EXTENDED EXTRA PROTECTIVE SECURITY TO RESIDENCES OF THREATENED POST OFFICERS; FOLLOW CAR AND ADDITIONAL POLICE ASSIGNED AMBASSADOR.

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2. MRS. RICHARD WELCH AND EMBASSY DRIVER, MR. EVANGELOS HRISOHOOS, WHEN INTERVIEWED, BY POLICE, IN SUBSTANCE ADVISED THAT ON DEC 23 AT APPROXIMATELY 9:40PM THEY DEPARTED IN COMPANY WITH MR. RICHARD WELCH FROM A PARTY AT RESIDENCE OF AMB KUBISCH. THEY ARRIVED AT APPROXIMATELY 10:05 PM AT THE GARDEN GATE ENTRANCE OF THE WELCH RESIDENCE. AS CUSTOMARY, THE DRIVER GOT OUT TO OPEN THE GATE, AND MR WELCH GOT OUT ON THE REAR RIGHT SIDE OF CAR. AS DRIVER WAS QUICKLY OPENING CAR DOOR ON LEFT SIDE TO ASSIST MRS WELCH, THREE UNKNOWN YOUNG MEN, DARK COMPLEXION, NONDESCRIPT CLOTHING AND ARMED WITH PISTOLS, APPROACHED FROM THE REAR. ALL THREE MEN WERE WEARING WOOL SKI MASKED CAPS. ONE OF THEM EXCLAIMED IN GREEK, "PUT UP YOUR HANDS AND DON'T MOVE." WHILE TWO OF THE MEN POINTED PISTOLS AT DRIVER AND MRS. WELCH, THE THIRD MAN QUICKLY WENT TO RIGHT REAR SIDE AND IMMEDIATELY SHOT MR. WELCH THREE TIMES. ASSAILANTS IMMEDIATELY RAN TO UNKNOWN CAR WITH MOTOR RUNNING AND QUICKLY DROVE OFF. DRIVER PHONED FOR ASSISTANCE. AMBULANCE DID NOT ARRIVE PROMPTLY, AND MR WELCH WAS TAKEN TO NEAREST HOSPITAL BY DRIVER AND MRS WELCH WHERE HE WAS PRONOUNCED DEAD ON ARRIVAL.

3. POSITIVE REACTION WAS IMMEDIATELY FORTHCOMING FROM THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE GOG AND PARTICULARLY FROM THE POLICE AND GENDARME. MIN OF DEFENSE AVEROFF TO AMB KUBISCH PROMISED DRASTIC POLICE ACTION TO APPREHEND ASSAILANTS AND PROVIDE ALL POSSIBLE PROTECTION FOR AMERICAN COMMUNITY. EXTENSIVE POLICE INVESTIGATION, WHICH HAS CONTINUED WITHOUT BREAK SINCE WELCH'S DEATH WAS REPORTED, HAS UNFORTUNATELY NOT DISCLOSED ASSAILANTS RESPONSIBLE, THEIR WHEREABOUTS OR POSSIBLE AFFILIATIONS. SECURITY FORCES THROUGHOUT GREECE SCREENED TRAVELLERS AT BORDER CROSSING POINTS AND AIRPORT. ALL PERSONS HAVING KNOWLEDGE OF CRIME HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED. GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD OF WELCH HOME HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY SCREENED FOR POSSIBLE EVIDENCE. CONFIDENTIAL

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ONE EXPENDED 45 CALIBER SLUG BELIEVED TO HAVE PASSED THROUGH WELCH'S BODY WAS DISCOVERED ON GROUND WHERE WELCH'S BODY FELL. CORONER'S INTERIM AUTOPSY REPORT DISCLOSED THAT ONE BULLET, 45 CALIBER, HIT HIGH ON RIB CAGE ON LEFT SIDE OF BODY LEAVING BODY LOW ON RIB CAGE ON RIGHT SIDE. SECOND BULLET PASSED THROUGH CLOTHING OVER CHEST BUT DID NOT TOUCH BODY. THIRD BULLET HIT HIPBONE ON RIGHT SIDE PASSING OUT OF BODY

SAME GENERAL AREA ON LEFT SIDE. OFFICIAL AUTOPSY REPORT TO FOLLOW.
DEATH WAS RESULT OF BULLET WOUNDS
DESCRIBED ABOVE. SECURITY FORCES INVESTIGATING
MURDER WORKING ROUND THE CLOCK UNDER
SUPERVISION OF TWO BRIGADIER GENERALS OF THE GENDARME.

4. LT. GENERAL KOUTSIANAS AND CHIEF OF CITY POLICE
TZAVELLAS ASSURED AMBASSADOR KUBISCH THAT EVERY
SECURITY MEASURE POSSIBLE WOULD BE EXTENDED FOR
PROTECTION OF AMERICANS IN GREECE AND THOSE PARTICU-
LARLY THREATENED BECAUSE OF THEIR OFFICIAL POSITION
OR AFFILIATION. PARTICULAR NOTE WAS TAKEN OF AN
ATHENS NEWSPAPER ARTICLE NOV 25 WHICH CARRIED PHOTO-
GRAPHS OF RESIDENCES, ADDRESSES AND NAMES OF
US EMBASSY OFFICERS ALLEGED TO BE AFFILIATED WITH
CIA. THOSE OFFICERS PLUS OTHER SENIOR MISSION OFFICERS
TOTALLING EIGHTEEN WILL FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE
HAVE POLICE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS PROTECTION AT THEIR
RESIDENCES. ADDITIONAL POLICE PROTECTION HAS BEEN
ARRANGED FOR AT RESIDENCES OF AMBASSADOR AND DCM.
UP TO THE PRESENT, AMB KUBISCH HAS HAD
TWENTY-FOUR HOUR POLICE BODYGUARD PROTECTION. IN
ADDITION, POLICE HAVE ASSIGNED A FOLLOW CAR WITH
TWO PLAINCLOTHES POLICEMAN TO ACCOMPANY AMBASSADOR
ON ALL VISITS.

5. DETAILS WILL BE REPORTED AS THEY DEVELOP.
KUBISCH

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